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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [EU](#) [CU](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: DISCOURAGING EU DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER'S VISIT
TO CUBA

REF: STATE 20108

Classified By: A/Political Counselor Jeff Hovenier for 1.4 (b) and (d)

(C) A/Political Counselor delivered reftel points discouraging EU Development Commissioner Michel's proposed visit to Cuba to Chris Maniakis-Grivas, the Deputy Director of the MFA's Directorate for Latin American and the Caribbean. Maniakis-Grivas said Brussels had reported U.S. concerns with the Michel visit. He noted that member states have "difficulties in controlling EU Commissioners," adding that in this particular case, there are genuine differences among EU members about how best to engage Raul Castro's Cuba.

He said the trip was likely to take place. Maniakis-Grivas took on board our points that should Michel travel to Cuba, he should meet with representatives of dissidents and civil society and should call for the release of political prisoners. Maniakis-Grivas said that Greece would seek to encourage thinking in Brussels along those lines. He added, however, that Greece is not among the major players within the EU on Latin American matters.

SPECKHARD